

*Supervisor Don Stapley, District 2, is the 2006 Chairman of the Board
Supervisor Fulton Brock, District 1, is the 2006 Vice-Chairman of the Board*

With 3.5 million people, Maricopa County is among the top five most populous counties in the country. And over 100,000 people are moving to our county every year. The East Valley is near the top of this population explosion and addressing the burgeoning growth is a strategic priority for us.

The Board of Supervisors manages operations throughout the entire county. The two of us live in and represent Districts 1 and 2, which encompass the entire East Valley from Carefree and Cave Creek at the North to Queen Creek and Chandler at the South. We want to assure you that the entire board is committed to ensuring a safe and quality environment for all our residents.

To the extent county government has jurisdiction, here are a few of our priorities for Maricopa County--and for the East Valley--in 2006 – 07.

Justice

In line with the County government's imperative to ensure safe communities in a fiscally responsible way by streamlining the justice system, we are building six consolidated court centers around the county, two of which will be in the East Valley. These centers, which anticipate the tremendous growth in the Valley, have the capacity to offer extended public services that are not now available in most stand-alone courts. Superior Courts, Justice Courts and Centers for Prevention of Domestic Violence all will be available at the consolidated centers.

The Southeast Justice Center, which will expand the existing facility at Mesa Drive and Highway 60 in Mesa, will provide additional courtrooms, judges, services and parking spaces to accommodate more people and cases more efficiently. When completed, it will be a showcase in the East Valley.

Also, construction will begin this year on the San Tan Consolidated Justice Center in Chandler. The new consolidated court centers provide increased service options, easier access to judicial coverage and less expensive services. They are expected to save county taxpayers over fifty million dollars in the next two decades.

Parks

Another county priority is providing recreation and preserving and strengthening the environment. Our Maricopa County Regional Park System is the largest municipal government park system in the United States, boasting 120,000 acres around the county. East Valley residents can enjoy the San Tan Regional Mountain Park south of Queen Creek, as well as Usury Regional Mountain Park in East Mesa and McDowell Regional Mountain Park near Fountain Hills.

Additional amenities will either be designed or constructed at all three of the East Valley parks this year, including more restrooms, family picnic areas and shade structures to accommodate the increasing number of visitors. When we recently updated our master plan for the San Tan Regional Mountain Park, we asked residents of the Southeast Valley for their input. Protecting the environment, recreation and education were identified as the primary objectives, and we believe this reflects the desires of all county residents.

Public Health

Promoting and protecting the public health of the community is another role of county government. Dramatic growth has affected the quality of the air we breathe, so we created the Maricopa County Air Quality department to improve our air. The Department is holding public town hall meetings throughout the county to explain the current state of air quality and hear residents concerns and answer questions. Meetings will be scheduled in the East Valley later this year.

Criminal justice, parks and recreation and public health are only a few areas county government oversees. Transportation, planning and zoning, flood control, public safety, libraries and animal care and control are among the wide-reaching jurisdiction of the Board of Supervisors. As residents of Maricopa County and the East Valley, we share your vested interest in our rapidly growing community. Please visit our website for information about all our departments: www.maricopa.gov. Thank you for the opportunity to serve. We are committed to continually improving our quality of life and look forward to a successful 2006.